

VZCZCXRO8855
PP RUEHLN RUEHVK RUEHYG
DE RUEHDBU #0442 0651048
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P R 061048Z MAR 06
FM AMEMBASSY DUSHANBE
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6892
INFO RUCNCIS/CIS COLLECTIVE
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA 1425
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 1466
RUEHRL/AMEMBASSY BERLIN 1455
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD 1406
RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL 1355
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 1421
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 1380
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 1314
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 1225
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC
RHMFISS/HQ USCENCOM MACDILL AFB FL
RHMFISS/HQ USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 1006
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO 1456
RUEHVEN/USMISSION USOSCE 1504
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS 0799
RUEHDBU/AMEMBASSY DUSHANBE 8014

UNCLAS DUSHANBE 000442

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE
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STATE FOR SCA/CEN, DRL

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SUBJECT: TAJIK STUDENTS DEMAND APOLOGY FROM EMBASSY OVER 2004 HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT

REF: 05 DUSHANBE 2014

11. (U) Students from Tajikistan's Technological University published an open letter March 2 criticizing by name an Embassy Public Affairs Section FSN for distributing the State Department's 2004 Human Rights Report on Tajikistan. The students charge the report with being slanderous and inaccurate. They said the report does not give enough attention to positive steps Tajikistan has made towards improving human rights. They fear the publication and distribution of such "black information" undermines Tajikistan's international reputation. Claiming the employee offended the Tajik people's dignity, and motivated by patriotism, the students demanded an apology from the Embassy employee to the students and the Tajik government. Two newspapers have published this open letter so far.

12. (U) During a human rights roundtable at Tajik Technological University December 12, EmbOffs distributed Russian-language copies of last year's Human Rights Report on Tajikistan and engaged students in a two-hour conversation (ref). Prior to December 12, the government purposely tried to block EmbOffs from holding the roundtable. Post originally approached the Russian-government-sponsored Russian-Tajik Slavonic University to host a discussion on human rights. When the Russian Embassy vetoed that plan, Post asked Tajik Technological University, but was refused by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. After the Embassy hand-delivered a diplomatic note to the president's adviser, the government finally relented at the last minute and allowed EmbOffs to speak with students at the Technological University.

13. (SBU) COMMENT: Given the government's original disapproval of the human rights discussion with students, post suspects the government had a hand in the open letter, although it was attributed to the students. The letter is an attempt to

discredit the Human Rights Report-the 2005 version slated for a March 8 release. Post will send the media a response letter from the Ambassador. END COMMENT.

HOAGLAND